

Video Marketing: How Important are Videos for the Hospitality Industry in Finland?

Bianca Hofstede



Author(s) Bianca Hofstede	
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<p>In the past few years, there has been many changes to the business environment of many companies. This has led to the development of new marketing forms, such as video marketing. Video marketing is increasingly popular. However, not all companies are successful in their video marketing efforts and researchers struggle to reach consensus in solving certain problems. The popularity and uncertainty of this topic has led to the decision to use it for this research. The objective of this paper is to find out how video marketing is perceived by marketing experts in Finland. The research aims to capture the perceived importance of video marketing in order to find out if this tool is considered beneficial in the hotel industry of Finland. Furthermore, the paper can help to improve the current practices of the industry and identify new topics for further research.</p> <p>Video marketing is a tool to stimulate customers in a fun, visual and personal way. Videos can lead to many financial and non-financial benefits for the company. They are often easier to remember and consume by customers. Research identified many different designs, contents and types of videos that work in different situations. Researchers suggest that all companies should have a clear strategy before they start with video marketing, in order to find the right goal, target and measurement for the videos. Multiple researchers believe that video marketing will become even more important in the future.</p> <p>In the paper, the qualitative research method was used. Multiple semi-structured interviews with marketing experts of the Finnish hospitality industry have been conducted during a time span of two months. The companies included in the studies all make use of video marketing, since it is expected they these companies have most knowledge about videos. The interviews consisted of eight pre-defined questions that related to the main and sub-questions of the paper,</p> <p>In conclusion, marketing experts believe that video marketing brings important benefits for companies. The videos evoke these benefits in multiple ways who differ per company. Yet, Video marketing does come with its challenges, which are mostly related to the strategy. This study also found that hospitality companies in Finland are not able to measure financial benefits. However, most companies do not need this information at this moment. Overall, companies believe that videos bring more benefits than they cost. Therefore, they are perceived as important. Furthermore, Finnish marketing experts believe that videos will become more important in the future.</p>	
Keywords Video Marketing, Marketing, Videos, Hospitality Industry, importance	

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1 Introduction

In the past few years, there has been many changes to the business environment of many companies. Some of these changes are related to the customer behaviour, which led to new challenges in reaching the customer with promotional messages. This has led to the development of new marketing forms. One of the popular forms at this moment is video marketing.

Video marketing can be defined as the practise of visually stimulating customers by telling a story in a fun and personal way with the use of a video (Mancuso & Stuth 2015, 14). When done successfully, it could lead to multiple financial and non-financial benefits for the company, such as an increase in sales, awareness and reach (Nielson-Field 2013, 2-3). Video marketing often supports other marketing strategies within the company, examples of these can be viral marketing and content marketing.

Even though here has been an increase in popularity, there are many companies who are not really successful in video marketing (Nielson-Field 2013, 2-3). Researchers argue that this is related to the lack of interesting content, good strategies and sufficient budgets (Costa-Sánchez 2016, 21). Furthermore, research shows that starting video marketing without a good strategy lead to over-investment (Nielson-Field 2013, 2-3). Many researchers have tried to solve these problems by doing more research in these areas. Yet, not much consensus is reached in order to solve the problems. This has led to much uncertainty among marketing managers and others involved. The popularity and uncertainty of this topic has led to the decision to use it for this research.

This research thesis will attempt to capture the perceived importance of video marketing in Finnish hospitality companies by researching the opinions about the effects that videos have on the companies and the challenges that come with video marketing. This is done by comparing the views of multiple marketing experts that are active in different hospitality companies in Helsinki that make use of videos. This approach is chosen, because it is expected that marketing experts have the most knowledge about and interest in the topic and hotels that already use videos are more likely to have thought about the effects and challenges of video marketing. This thesis makes use of the qualitative research methods by conducting multiple interviews.

Before starting the actual research, a desk research was conducted. In this part, several issues regarding video marketing were identified, which led to multiple questions. These questions were combined into a research question and multiple sub-questions.

Most researchers identify video marketing as one of the most important tools at this moment. Yet, this tool still brings a lot of challenges and uncertainty. There are many components in video marketing where no consensus could be reached. However, most of the studies are based on the view of researchers. This thesis will look at video marketing from the marketing expert perspective. What is the perceived importance of video marketing in hospitality companies in Finland? This paper hopes to answer this main question. Some sub-questions were created to find more information to solve the main question. Is video marketing an important part of the marketing strategies of the companies? How is video marketing done by these companies in Finland? Do marketing experts perceive the same challenges as the researchers identified? What effect do the challenges they face have on their video marketing strategies? Are the current video marketing practices of hospitality companies in Finland considered useful enough to be worth the budget?

This paper will start with a theoretical framework. In the first chapter, the reader will find information on what video marketing is and why it is done. Furthermore, researched content and design suggestions are mentioned and ways to measure the videos are given. In the third chapter the difference between viral marketing and content marketing is explained. The fourth chapter will explain the methodology of the research to the reader. This includes the objectives of the paper, the methods used during the research, the question design of the interviews and the coding and analysis method used. Chapter five will discuss the results of the research and the last chapter will draw a conclusion, give limitations, credibility, validity and suggestions for further research.

2 Video Marketing

Video marketing has become very important for most companies in this internet era. To fully understand video marketing, it is important to know what video marketing is and why it is used. Furthermore, it can be important to know what content a video could contain and how it can be measured.

In the current social environment it is common to avoid and skip advertising (Teixeira, Wedel & Pieters 2012, 144). Besides this, the effects of traditional media is, most of the time, not worth the cost anymore. In the old days direct sales and marketing campaigns were the only source of information and therefore very successful. Nowadays, customers can look on the internet for information, reviews, recommendations and the products of competitors. The customer can find nearly all information needed and therefore they only value more specific, accurate and relevant information that will make them more knowledgeable for their decision making process. (Jefferson & Tanton 2012, 1.) Therefore, advertisers are trying different ways to attract the attention of their target group (Teixeira, Wedel & Pieters 2012, 144). However, the arrival of internet, social media in particular, did not make it easy for marketers to deliver. Delivering content on a consistent basis in different channels is complex and difficult and measuring the effects of the content is hard. (Lieb 2012, 11-12.)

Another phenomena that has developed over the past few years is the customer's lack of trust in the sales pitches that are made by companies. Customers get exposed by more marketing messages a day than a few years ago. Yet, customers are not turning out on all of them, but they become more selective. (Pulizzi 2014, 20.) Customers are looking for prove that shows the expertise, usefulness, personality and humanity of companies rather than the advertisements for the products. Besides this, they do not want to be directly influenced in their buying decisions anymore. Instead they demand information that helps them to make their own decisions. (Jefferson & Tanton 2012, 40.) At first customers were looking for product information, now they are searching for experiences (Manic 2015, 94). Research found that the recommendations of others are the most trusted source online (Thickstun 2017, 41). Brand websites are the second most trusted source, because of their content (Lieb 2012, 2).

All these changes in the business environment has led to new forms of marketing. One popular form of marketing at this moment is video marketing. Video marketing is a marketing tool where fun and personal stories are told in the form of a video, to visually stimulate customers. (Mancuso & Stuth 2015, 14). Videos can lead to more sales and publicity for

the company (Nielson-Field 2013, 2-3). They are easy to remember for the viewer, since they stimulate the brain in multiple ways (Manic 2015, 89). Memory and the visuals help the customers to relate to the brand (Botha & Reyneke 2013, 163). If successful, videos increase the engagement of the viewer, triggering them to share the brand and buy the products or services (Teixeira, Wendel & Pieters 2012, 144). Furthermore, multiple studies argue that people prefer to watch a video over reading a text. One of the reason for this is the ease of which visual content such as videos can be consumed. (Luke 2013, 18.) This is especially true for mobile devices, since it is easier to watch a video than to read a text on a small screen (Costa-Sánchez 2016, 18). Video marketing is often used by companies to support other marketing strategies like viral marketing and content marketing.

There are many different types of videos that a company can make. The most common videos at this moment are advertising, explanatory, training and educational videos. Advertising videos are short videos that are created for brand awareness or direct commercial goals. They often try to gain a lot of views and shares in a short period of time and are often accompanied by a broadcasted advertisement on T.V. Advertising videos are often used in viral marketing. (Dafonte-Gómez 2014, 200.) Explanatory videos are made to explain difficult and complex concepts by telling it in a short story or by graphics. Training videos are different, since they are made to teach viewers how to do certain things. Companies could make videos about their own products and services or about so called “life hacks” that teach people how they can do day-to-day things in a faster or smarter way. These videos are often entertaining and relevant for a lot of people. Educational videos are used to share knowledge about particular issues. The viewer will get more information about the problem they have and the advertiser is able to show expertise and the ability to solve problems. Explanatory, training and educational videos are longer because they share a lot of content with the customers, therefore they are mostly used in content marketing. All types of videos can create trust and engagement with the customer. When the viewer is looking to buy a product or a service it will remember the impression of the video or that the company helped to solve their other problems. The production of videos can be cost effective when the viewers would otherwise need help of a staff member or if a staff member has to do things for them. Videos can therefore save labor costs. (Luke 2013, 18-19.) In all cases the video should be visually appealing, entertaining, unique and relevant in order to engage the viewers (Offut 2011, 3-4).

The production of videos used to be very expensive. However, in recent years the cost for producing videos has lowered significantly, making video marketing an achievable and even cost effective possibility. (Luke 2013, 18; Pulizzi 2012, 117.) It is expected that within a few years video marketing is the standard (Luke 2013, 19). Videos will become the main

type of content that is going to be distributed and this will be even more stimulated by technical innovations, which will keep changing the market every time. Researchers expect that videos become more important in the purchase decisions of customers, therefore they will play a bigger role in marketing practices. (Pulizzi 2012, 122.)

At this moment however, companies are often not able to implement video marketing successfully (van der Lans, van Bruggen, Eliashberg & Wierenga 2010, 348; Nelson-Field 2013, 2-3). If a video is successful it can lead to more sales and publicity. Yet, some researchers state that most brand videos can be seen as a waste of time, effort and money because they are not viewed and shared by enough people. (Nielson-Field 2013, 2-3.) Research found that this often happens due to a lack of attractive content, a good strategy or enough budget (Costa-Sánchez 2016, 21). Marketers should be aware of this danger and take measures to prevent the waste of resources. At this moment most marketers start the creation of videos because it is popular and they do not want to lack behind on their competitors. However, this may lead to over-investment. (Nielson-Field 2013, 2-3.) Furthermore, Video marketing often has many objectives that it tries to reach and a variety of ways that customers can engage with the company. Finding a suitable way to measure all objectives is hard. (Cruz & Fill 2008, 747.) When companies are not able to find measures to evaluate their efforts, it can lead to uncertainty and misunderstanding (Gilfoil & Jobs 2012, 639). In the next two subchapters the suggested content and ways to budget and measure video marketing efforts will be discussed.

2.1 The Creation of Videos

Research states that the success of video marketing lays in the relevance, content and evoked emotion of the video. Videos are able to evoke more emotional reactions than other marketing efforts, because seeing the emotion of another person, animal or object activates mirroring parts of our brain that makes us feel the same way as the person in the video (Botha & Reyneke 2013, 162). Studies reveal that it is important that the message of videos provoke emotions to customers in order to engage them and trigger them to share the content with friends and family. (Teixeira, Wedel & Pieters 2012, 144.) Strong emotional reactions are sometimes called high-arousal. Small, not so strong emotional reactions are called low-arousal reactions. Research found that high-arousal videos, like surprise or happiness, get twice as many shares, on average, then low-arousal videos. Yet, many marketers create videos that are trying to evoke low-arousal videos, like entertainment, since this is easier to achieve. (Nielson-Field 2013, 29.)

Emotions can lead to avoiding or attracting to the source of stimulation. Negative emotions tend to lead to avoiding or even rejecting the source, while positive emotions lead to

approaching and retaining the source that led to the emotions. (Teixeira, Wedel & Pieters 2012, 146.) This means that, especially positive emotions are likely to be received positively and be shared with others. Videos that stimulate negative emotions or no emotional reaction at all, are often not shared at all. (Botha & Reyneke 2013, 168; Teixeira, Wedel & Pieters 2012, 146; Wong An Kee & Yazdanifard 2015, 1058.) Positive emotions can both attract the customer and increase the focus for a moment within the video, which leads to an increase in the concentration. This increases the chance that viewers will watch the full video. In other words, positive emotions create a greater viewer retention and lead to less avoidance of the advertisement. (Teixeira, Wedel & Pieters 2012, 146.)

It seems that, if viewers of a video are familiar with the content, their ability to relate to the video is higher and their emotional connection is therefore generally stronger. Studies show that unfamiliar content leads to no or little emotions. However, viewers were only willing to spread the message if they are emotionally connected. (Botha & Reyneke 2013, 168.) According to these studies, it can be said that the content is the first determined for sharing videos, since this leads to the emotional reaction. In case of a video that has general content it is assessed immediately on the emotion it brings. It was also found that if the content had a specific theme, it was assessed by the relevance of the topic before looking at the emotions. (Botha & Reyneke 2013, 168.) It is important for marketers to know that there is a different reaction between themed videos and general videos, since it has effect on the objectives and the seeding of the video.

To make it easier for customers to understand and familiarise with the content of a video, marketers can make use of storytelling. It is found that humans find stories more compelling and easier to remember than a presentation of simple facts, since stories activate different parts of our brain. Stories create frameworks about the past, present and future of companies. Multiple studies even argue that our memories are mainly based on stories. (Gilliam & Flaherty 2015, 133.) And memory is vital for sales, therefore marketers should focus on creating stories with content that will be remembered by the target group. (Nelson-Field 2013, 69-74.) Furthermore, storytelling is important for marketers, since they are not always trusted. Storytelling helps marketers to convince the target audience. A story that is easy to remember helps to engage the audience. In contradiction to other techniques such as persuading arguments, storytelling leads to less counterarguments and negotiations, which leads to sales more easily. Stories also demonstrate rather than explain the facts and features of products and services. As mentioned before, this is where people are looking for now a days. (Gilliam & Flaherty 2015, 133-134.) Stories also make it easier for customers to believe what is said. Researchers argue that stories stimulate a part of the brain that is able to deal with uncertainty and false statements. In other words,

when information is shared in the form of a story people become less critical about the content. The opposite is true for arguments, these activate a part of the brain that is more critical. (Gilliam & Flaherty 2015, 134.)

In video marketing, visual storytelling is used. Most things that people perceive is done through visual content, research considers it about 90%. Therefore visual content and stories are easier to consume for the customer. (Manic 2015, 89.) Pictures, images and graphics grab the interest and the attention of the audience better than written text (Lieb 2012, 20). Furthermore, visuals often go beyond cultural and language barriers and it also enables people to tell a story in a short period of time. This is needed in today's social environment because the attention span of people is short now a days. (Manic 2015, 89.) Research found that customers have a concentration span of approximately 9 seconds, short messages are therefore preferred (Pulizzi 2014, 20). Remembering visual content is also easier than remembering reading material (Manic 2015, 89).

There are many different types of visuals. The main three are illustrations, comics and videos. Illustrations are drawings, photos or memes. They convey messages by static visuals that are sometimes accompanied by small pieces of texts. Comics are also static. They are small images and pieces of text that are structured in a way to tell a story. Videos are non-static. They are made to tell a story or convey a message in a more visually stimulating manner. All types of visual content is more effective in convincing the audiences, than other content. However, people can easier relate and are more emotionally connected to videos. (Manic 2015, 90.) Most likely because it gives the brain more stimulation since movement can be seen and more stories can be told (Mancuso & Stuth 2014, 18). Also the human touch that can be given to videos has an influence on the connection (Botha & Reyneke 2013, 162).

The goal of storytelling is often to create specific stories that are relatable for the customer (Patruti-Baltes 2015, 112). However research found that, even though most companies use storytelling, it is still hard for the advertisers to create content that engages their target market and brings good results. Studies suggest that marketers should think more like publishers in order to create more engagement stories for their customers. (Pulizzi 2012, 123.) Furthermore, they should have a proper marketing strategy before starting (Pulizzi 2014, 4).

The content of videos is also determined by the topic of the video or the so called "creative device". These creative devices try to evoke emotional responses. There are many topics that can be addressed in videos, some of these are humour, sex, violence, animals,

children, personal triumph and celebrities (Luke 2013, 18-19; Nielson-Field 2013, 37-39; Yang & Wang 2015, 908). However, no single topic has a better or less change of evoking high-arousal or low-arousal emotional responses. Yet, research found that personal triumph is more likely to be shared no matter the strength of the response. Despite this fact, it is one of the less used topics. Researchers suggest that this is because it is for many companies hard to demonstrate this topic in their videos. Therefore they choose to make videos about topics that are easier to capture. (Nielson-Field 2013, 39.)

Other researchers and experts say that, besides the content and the emotions, variation in the way the videos are made is important as well. Otherwise the audients could get bored and uninterested. (Offut 2011, 3 ;Wong An Kee & Yazdanifard 2015, 1058.) One way of varying the videos is with the use of so called social artists. Social artists are people who are able to have a great impact on people or organizations within their community in creative ways (Wong An Kee & Yazdanifard 2012, 1060). Examples of these people are bloggers and vloggers. These social artists, such as vloggers, can be used to tell their experiences with the brand. This is useful since people trust user-generated content more than content directly created by the brand (Wong An Kee & Yazdanifard 2012, 1059).

In today's digital era, customers are looking for opportunities to participate in generating information and sharing this and other information with their contacts (Bhalla 2011, 4). The participation and sharing of content often goes hand in hand, since sharing content usually includes some form of electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM). Participants add comments or stories, often about their own experiences, to the content that they share with others. (Yang & Wang 2015.) Multiple studies state that allowing customers to participate by inviting them to tell their own stories and interpretations could build trust and loyalty. (Jefferson & Tanton 2015, 77; Mancuso & Stuth 2014, 18; Mancuso & Stuth 2015, 14; Yang & Wang 2015, 908.) Besides this, electronic word-of-mouth of others seem to increase purchase intentions of individuals, especially for services (Cruz & Fill 2008, 744;Yang & Wang 2015, 908). Marketers should therefore stimulate this participation of viewers by giving opportunities to create messages about the product, service, brand or company. This way promotional content is passed along on the internet, which can create buzz and an increase in reach, sales, market share and reputation. (Mancuso and Stuth 2015, 14; Rollins, Anitsal & Anitsal 2014, 3;Yang & Wang 2015, 908.)

Marketers can only control the spread of their content by two ways. They can either stimulate their target group by intrinsic and extrinsic motivations or they can control the number of seeding. (van der Lans et al. 2010, 349) As explained above, the motivation of people is determined by many variables, making it hard to control it. Therefore, marketers should

also pay attention to the distribution of the video. This will help to get more views and shares from the customers. (Nielson-Field 2013, 61.) The first people the company reaches by sharing the video on social networks, sending emails or paying views are considered the seeding. Seeding techniques give the opportunity to target a specific group of people. This seeding is also important, because only a few viewers actually share the video with others. When starting with a large crowd in the beginning the video will reach more people by sharing and those viewers will share it again with others. If only a few people see the video, it is not likely that it will be shared by many. (Nielson-Field 2013, 61.) It is important for markets to find the right people for their seeding (Sankar & Kumar 2016, 13). Some researchers state, there are two types of customers, namely innovators and imitators. Innovators are the first to adopt behaviour such as buying the newest products. They are barely influenced by social pressure. Imitators, on the other hand, are influenced by the decisions of other buyers. During the decision making process, these imitators will look at people that are influential and a small group of people around them. (Sankar & Sundaram 2016, 2-3.) Normally seeding is done by random sampling, however identifying the right influencers could lead to better results. Influencers are often innovators, choosing these individuals often lead to a large reach. (Sankar & Kumar 2016, 13.)

Social Media is one of the most common ways to reach the customers nowadays (Jefferson & Tanton 2015, 18). It can help to spread the content created faster than other mediums can. A popular form of social media in today's society are the social networks. Social networks are social structures that consist of multiple individuals that are connected by specific forms of interdependency. This can include many things such as, friendship, common interests or knowledge. (Lieb 2012, 62.) Social networks has made building and communication with very large networks easy. As mentioned before, customers are asking for recommendations before buying the products. They often make use of social media to do so. They can reach their friends or contacts that has advice or referrals or they look for the valuable content created by companies. Research states that word-of-mouth recommendations are still the most trusted resource of advertisement and social media has the platforms that spread the most word-of-mouth recommendations. (Jefferson & Tanton 2015, 20.) However, marketers must make sure that the content they create is spread on the right platform and it needs to appeal to highly-connected individuals, also called opinion leaders or influencers. (Rollins, Anitsal & Anitsal 2014, 3.)

Then there are some researchers who argue that removing the brand from the story helps to increase the amount of shares done by people. They claim that this is because removing the sales pitch from the story creates trust and credibility from the customers. (Pulizzi 2012, 122; Teixeira, Wedel & Pieters 2012, 155.) Furthermore they argue that if a video is

branded too much, the motives, which are often sharing a fun video, of the sender will be questioned by the receiver, who might think it was sent to promote the brand. This changes the intentions of the sender, the sender tries to avoid this and therefore branded videos create a lower desire to forward. Researchers state that most videos are all about forwarding, therefore the brand information should be low. (Huang & Zhou 2016, 1160.) Others argue the opposite. They state that there is no generalized evidence who show that taking the brand away would make a video to be shared more. They even state that poorly branded videos are a waste of money. (Nielson-Field 2013, 47.) Their researches show that most young adults do not avoid branded content and even suggest these individuals like to talk about brands (Ferguson 2008, 180). This disagreement makes it hard for marketers to decide how they brand their marketing efforts. However, at this moment, many marketers use a subtle approach on branding. (Nielson-Field 2013, 45.)

2.2 Suggested strategy framework and Measurements

Before starting a video marketing campaign, a good strategy and budgeting plan needs to be made. Companies could make use of specially designed frameworks to plan their campaigns. One of these frameworks is made by Gilfoil and Jobs (2012) which is created to help marketers to understand, implement and measure marketing efforts in social media. In their framework they suggest a three layer approach to making a campaign. They argue that the marketing message can be made for different levels in the company. For example, a hotel could make a campaign to promote its rooms, which is on corporate level or it could promote the use of hotels overall, which is on industry level. Besides this, the objectives can differ per campaign. The initiatives could be, for example, sales, customer service or research and development. These two variables then define the way the marketing effort is measured. (Gilfoil & Jobs 2012, 641-642.)

Measuring and evaluating any type of campaign is very important and many marketers think measures such as return on investment (ROI) are key for decision making and justifying expenses (Cruz & Fill 2008, 751; Gilfoil & Jobs 2012, 639; van der Lans et al. 2010, 348). However, measuring ROI and other evaluations is very complex and hard (Cruz & Fill 2008, 747; Ferguson 2008, 181). The topic is widely researched and discussed by researchers and experts, but so far there is little agreement on what to measure (Cruz & Fill 2008, 747; Gilfoil & Jobs 2012, 639). This disagreement and uncertainty can also be seen within companies. An example of this is the growth of budget expenses. Budgets for online marketing, such as viral marketing has grown. However, the growth is still small in comparison with the budgets of other marketing efforts. Researchers think that this is due to a lack of trust among financial controllers about the actual economic value of marketing tools, like videos. (Gilfoil & Jobs 2012, 639.)

Even though there is little consensus about the measurement, there are a lot of suggestions on what could be measured. Marketers often want financial measures for their video marketing campaigns. Yet, researchers argue that non-financial measures are just as important for the company and should therefore be taken into consideration when the campaign is evaluated (Cruz & Fill 2008, 752; Rollins, Anitsal & Anitsal 2014, 16). Probably the most used financial measurement is ROI, which can be calculated by subtracting the cost of the investment from the gains of the investment, divided by the same costs. The non-financial measurements are often based on the behaviour and awareness of the target group. These benefits often lead to financial gains in the future. In other words, in many cases, these non-financial benefits eventually turn into an increase in ROI. An example of this could be the measurement of leads that are expected to become sales in the future. Therefore, non-financial benefits are very important. (Gilfoil & Jobs 2012, 639.)

Overall it seems that most suggested measurements can be put into three groups, namely financial outcomes, cognitive behaviour and behavioural changes. Companies could base their objectives on these three groups. Cognitive objectives can be measured by the reach, the created awareness and increase in knowledge of the customer (Cruz & Fill 2008, 754). Advertising awareness, for example, could lead to preferring the brand, which could lead to more sales in the future (Srinivasan 2015, 29). Behavioural goals can be measured by the amount of views, shares and the speed of spreading. When viral video marketing is done correctly it will lead to sharing and the creation of electronic word-of-mouth by the target group. Theoretically this spread of content leads to more individuals that become interested in the company, which leads to more future sales (Ferguson 2008, 182). Besides this, the willingness of customers to recommend and share the company to others demonstrates a deep form of engagement with the company (Cruz & Fill 2008, 744; Dafonte-Gómez 2014, 202; Ferguson 2008, 181). Research suggests that measurements such as the amount of views, only define the level of activity and not the end result, while the amount of shares gives an indication on the level of engagement, which is an end result (Dafonte-Gómez 2014, 202). Return on investment objectives can be measured by the sales and brand equity that derived from the message that is spread. However, this is very hard at the moment, because it is hard to trace. (Cruz & Fill 2008, 751.)

It is argued that both cognitive and behavioural changes can be measured by tracing the information stream (Cruz & Fill 2008, 754). Yet, at this moment marketers are only able to measure the reach of sharing and eWOM partially. Therefore, the full effect of a campaign cannot be measured yet. Marketers are looking for reliable matrices that can capture the

behaviour of customers better. However, this is still not found for viral videos, so they are still hard to measure (Ferguson 2008, 181).

There is one thing that researchers do agree on, every campaign has different objectives and every objective needs his own unique measurement tool (Cruz & Fill 2008, 744).

Therefore, there is not one best way in measuring the effects of marketing, although researchers suggest a combination of cognitive, behavioural and financial measures (Cruz & Fill 2008, 744).

3 Viral Marketing and content marketing

Video marketing can be used in both viral and content marketing and most companies use a combination of the two marketing forms (Nielson-Field 2013, 2-3). However, these two forms of marketing have some differences in goals and implementation. Furthermore, they often make use of different kind of videos. Marketers should think about the focus of the video, because the content, strategy and measurement of videos differ if the video is more focused on viral or content marketing. This way the right goals for the video can be set and met. (Gilfoil & Jobs 2012, 641-642.) It is therefore important to know the difference between viral and content marketing.

There are many people that confuse content marketing with viral marketing or the other way around. However, there are multiple differences between these two forms of marketing. Viral marketing was created when internet became popular. It was made to reach customers globally in a short period of time. Today, viral messages play an important role in influencing the opinions of people, which makes viral marketing popular (Botha & Reyneke 2013, 161.) Both content marketing and viral marketing make use of the internet. However, viral marketing mainly focuses on positioning the brand in social networking channels by generating as much views and shares as possible. They try to achieve more brand awareness and start up conversations with as many viewers as possible. (Botha & Reyneke 2013, 160-161.) The goal of video marketing in viral marketing is to gain as many views and shares, visibility and publicity as possible by offering free and engaging content that is distributed by peer-to-peer forwarding all over the web. Marketers hope that this leads to more engagement and trust among the viewers. This then could lead to more leads and sales. (Dafonte-Gómez 2014, 200.) As mentioned in the first chapter, viral marketing often makes use of advertising videos. These videos usually have either direct or indirect commercial goals and are made to be seen and shared in a short period of time (Dafonte-Gómez 2014, 200).

Content marketing is different. It focuses on the idea that the customer is already searching for the content of the company, which makes them already interested, open and receptive for the message. (Lieb 2012, 1-2.) It tries to deliver the content that the target group is looking for, in the places where they are searching. The information that is provided is usually non-product content that is informational, educational and/or entertaining, created to let customers focus on a topic around the product or service sold. (Patruti-Baltes 2015, 112.) In other words, content marketing gives helpful information about the challenge the customer has, instead of the solution that the company sells. The content that is provided is made with the customer's point of view, offering answers to their questions.

(Jefferson & Tanton 2012, 38-39.) However, the goal is still to stimulate customers to search for more information about the company. Therefore, the content created needs to be in line with the brand message and the company's values. The purpose of content marketing is to build relationships by sharing content that helps customers to know and trust the company. It is created with the idea that sharing content will lead to goodwill for the company because the company gives away information that is so good that people would pay for it, yet they give it for free. (Pulizzi 2014, 8) This would result in more interest from the customers and more leads, which could lead to more sales (Jefferson & Tanton 2012, 41; Jefferson & Tanton 2015, 16). It focuses on linking content to the brand website, the links to the content are spread through social media. Content marketing tries to generate more leads and demand for the brand via their own website. Content created for content marketing is often deeper and longer than that of viral or social media marketing. (Pulizzi 2014,8.) In this case often explanatory, training and educational videos are used, since these videos can give extensive information to customers (Luke 2013, 18-19).

Both viral marketing and content marketing create videos that need to have valuable content. According to some researchers, content is considered valuable when it is useful for the customer, it is focused on a certain target audience and understandable and of good quality. Some even say that marketers should think like publishers in order to write content that consumers are looking for (Lieb 2012, 11-12; Pulizzi 2012, 123). Creating new content is hard, so experts suggest that marketers should also give opinions and expert views on content that is already there. This gives marketers to opportunity to tell customers what the news means to them, this makes it more valuable. (Lieb 2012, 52.)

Even though the difference between the two marketing forms may seem small, it have great effect on the objective, implementation and measurement of the video campaign. Marketers should describe the goal and the focus of the video marketing campaign in detail, so they can choose the right measurement for the evaluation of the campaign (Gilfoil & Jobs 2012, 641-642). Wrong interpretation of these two different marketing types could lead to different outcomes than targeted.

Besides being used for viral and content marketing, videos can also be used in search engine marketing. Putting the right keywords in the page where the video is uploaded is crucial, this way customers are able to find it. (Patruti-Baltes 2015, 115.) When done correctly, the video will bring the company a higher position on search engines, such as Google, Yahoo and even YouTube. Higher positions, often lead to more visibility, awareness and sales for the company. (Dou, Liam, Su, Zhou & Cui 2010, 262.) Therefore, videos can be used of search engine optimisation.

4 Methodology

This research paper makes use of the qualitative research method to find answers on the research questions and the sub-questions. The upcoming chapter will introduce the method and several boundaries that the research will follow in order to be as reliable and valid as possible. Besides this, the chapter will explain how the research will be conducted in more detail and why these approaches are chosen.

4.1 Objectives

The objective of this paper is to find out how video marketing is perceived by marketing experts in Finland. Video marketing has become an important subject in marketing for the past few years (Mancuso & Stuth 2015, 14). This because there are many challenges in video marketing. Researchers are unable to reach consensus about these challenges and this seems to affect marketers across all industries. Studies show that marketers are unsure about the benefits of video marketing and how to improve these. This research aims to capture the perceived importance of video marketing in order to find out if this tool is considered beneficial in the hotel industry of Finland, meaning that it brings more value than it costs. The research tries to answer this by looking at the current practises of video marketing in hotels and why these are done, considering the difficulty of measurement for videos. Prove that videos have more benefits than cost, could lead to more investment in video marketing. Furthermore, the study enables the researcher to find the differences between the theory and practise. This can then help the industry to improve the current practises by using the theory and could identify new topics for further research.

4.2 Methods

The thesis will make use of qualitative research. Qualitative research consists of multiple approaches to and methods for the study of social science (Saldaña, Leavy & Beretvas 2011, 3). It tries to describe, define and explain social phenomenon (Beuving 2014, 20). This research method often looks at text or visual material to find answers, which are often non-quantitative. It can be used in many different types of research, such as describing a phenomena or evaluating the effectiveness of programs. The method often makes use of interviews to effectively document the respondents own words, perspectives, feelings, opinions, values, attitudes and beliefs. This derives in-depth findings that will give insights in the topic that needs to be answered. (Saldaña, Leavy & Beretvas 2011, 32.) The qualitative research method is used in this thesis because of the extensive and valuable information it can give. Qualitative research will give the opportunity to select the respondents based on their positions, knowledge and experience. This is needed because this

thesis is searching for opinions, perceptions and examples of experts that are located in the hotel industry of Helsinki. Using a quantitative research method with random sampling in this context could lead to superficial information that will not give a complete answer to the research topics. This due to the level of expertise of potential respondents. Furthermore, the nature of qualitative research is usually to look for answers to understand the research problem by examining language, while quantitative research is often looking for numerical data (Beuving 2014, 20). This thesis is aiming to capture the perceptions of managers and therefore qualitative research is more useful.

For this qualitative research multiple interviews were held to gather data that is relevant for the research question. The data gathered provides input for a literature discussion where it is compared and related to the already existing literature. The interviews were conducted by the author according the subjective approach. This means that the researcher beliefs that interview data is constructed by both the participant and the interviewer. The participants give the most information, however the interviewer participates in the creation of this data by asking questions, responding to the view of the participants and by analysing the data. Therefore, the interviewer has a role in constructing meaning to the interview. (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill 2016, 390.) Besides this, the interviews are based on the semi-structured interview format. Therefore, the interview consist of a list of key themes and questions that will be discussed during the interview. However, the order of these questions can differ per interview. (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill 2016, 391.) The interviews were conducted in a face-to-face setting with several marketing experts that work hotels who use some form of video marketing. The persons were selected on the insights and opinions they can provide on the issue of measuring video marketing efforts because of their job position. The one-on-one setting of the interviews was chosen, since research suggest that participants are more likely to agree to be interviewed, rather than they agree to fill in a questionnaire (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill 2016, 394).

In the fifth chapter of the thesis the evaluation of the interviews and the comparison and discussion with the already existing literature can be found. Furthermore, the conclusions can be found in chapter 6.

4.3 Question design

The thesis is aiming to give a clear image about the perceived importance of video marketing efforts in the hotel industry of Finland. It is chosen to interview managers and marketing experts to gain information about their perceptions on video marketing. As explained before, qualitative research with the interview method is the best suitable ap-

proach for this thesis, since in-depth information is needed. In order to give the most consistent answer to the research question as possible, all interviews are conducted with the same question format (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill 2016, 395). However, as mentioned before the interviews are based on a semi-structured interview format. This will allow participants to give in-depth and personal answers, because of the open questions. Furthermore, it allows the researcher to ask more or leave out questions were needed. The researcher is also able to ask more strict questions which will provide more quantitative data. (Hair, Samouel, Page, Celsi & Money 2016, 153.) The questions that will be presented during the interviews can be found in appendix 1

The author has chosen to only interview marketing experts from hospitality companies in Finland that use some form of video marketing already, since it is expected that these companies have more knowledge about the effects and challenges of video marketing. Furthermore, only marketing experts were interviewed, since they are considered to be the most knowledgeable about the subject. Due to the amount of hospitality companies located in the Helsinki area, it is decided to select the participants here. The participants work in different type of hotels and hotel chains in order to get a brought view of the industry. Besides this, the participants were selected on availability. Only few of the selected sample were able and willing to participate in the research. All interviews were done within a time span of two months, namely March and April 2017.

The questions of the interview are based on the research question and the five sub-questions made in the beginning of the paper. In the theoretical framework these questions were analysed by a desk research. The interviews hope to shed a light on the situation in Finland. It hopes to find why video marketing is done, how it is done and if the challenges, if any, are the same as research describes. In total eight questions were made. The first two questions are related to why the company make videos. The questions ask for the benefits of video and why these are important for the company. The third question is about the content and design of the videos. The fourth question explores the strategies behind the videos, such as the goalsetting, targeting, distribution channels and seeding. These two questions try to answer how Finnish hospitality companies do video marketing and if this is comparable to what researches suggest. Questions five and six try to discover the current challenges that the companies face while doing video marketing. These outcomes can then be compared with the theoretical framework. Question seven and eight gives some more insights in all three the aspects. Question seven elaborates on the measurements of videos, while question eight examines if the actual and perceived benefits outweighed the cost for making, distributing and measuring the videos. The answers of

the questions will be analysed and the most important findings will be described in the results. The comparison between the results and the theoretical framework than lead to the answers of the five sub-questions and the research question.

All questions of the interview will be open ended, which gives the respondents the opportunity to explain their point of view about the topics regarding video marketing. This gives rich data to that create depth research possibilities to find an agreement between the industry opinion and previous research (Saldaña, Leavy & Beretvas 2011, 37).

4.4 Coding system and analysis

In order to analyse the transcripts of the interviews, a coding system is needed. This systems enables the researcher to codify the qualitative data into groups and categories that give meaning and explanation to the data (Saldaña 2009, 8). In this thesis all coding is done according the lumping method. This means that the information is coded with just a view big codes. This is useful for this thesis, since lumping is able to capture the essence of the phenomena. Besides this it saves a lot of time and is less overwhelming for the researcher. (Saldaña 2009, 19.) Qualitative data is often re-coded multiple times to make sure that the results capture the right meaning and explanation. The process of coding can therefore be seen as a cyclical process. Usually, two cycles are used in a research. In the first cycle the qualitative data gets its initial codes and in the second cycle the recoding of this information is done. (Saldaña 2009, 45.)

This thesis also makes use of two cycles. First the qualitative data will be coded with the descriptive coding method. This method codes the information according topics that describe what the content is about. This method is often used by beginning qualitative researchers, since it is helpful for learning how to code data. It can be used for a variety of data forms such as interview transcripts and it helps to find clarify what phenomena have been observed. (Saldaña 2009, 70) An example of this are the different benefits that companies perceive they are gaining from video marketing. These can be more views, shares, comments and likes or things like increased knowledge and awareness of the customers. Also the increase in leads and sales are codes that are used. In the second cycle pattern coding is used. This system helps the researcher to group the summaries in smaller themes, in order to capture the essence of the information (Saldaña 2009, 152). When looking at the same example, the small codes can be collected in bigger codes. The increase views, shares, comments and likes can be categorized in behavioural benefits, while awareness and knowledge are cognitive benefits and increase in leads and sales financial benefits. When the coding is done, the analysis of these information can be done. The process of actually analysing data does not have a standard model, since the

data is unique. Good analysis of the data is therefore done by learning-by-doing. (Saldaña 2011, 137-138.) In the analysis of the interviews the answers of the participants will be compared with each other. The most important and surprising information will be converted into the findings. The results of the analysis can then be compared with the theory.

5 Results

For this research paper, interviews with marketing experts of the Finnish hotel industry were conducted. In this chapter the results of these interviews will be presented. First a short introduction of the interviewees will be given, then the results of the interviews will be discussed. The information derived from this chapter will then provide the input for the conclusion of his research paper.

5.1 Data analysis

The first interview was done in a small independent hotel in Helsinki. The interviewee is involved in the decision making for the marketing efforts of the hotel and can therefore be seen as an marketing expert within the company. In the thesis this person will be referred to as interviewee 1 or participant 1.

The second interview was done with a marketing specialist of a chain that has a variety of hospitality enterprises in Scandinavia. The interviewee is responsible for creating online content, including videos. In the thesis this person will be referred to as interviewee 2 or participant 2.

The third interview was done in a small hostel chain located in Helsinki. The interviewee is co-founder and partner of the company and therefore involved in the decision making of the marketing efforts. In the thesis this person will be referred to as interviewee 3 or participant 3.

The last interview was done with the marketing manager of a small hotel collection that has multiple locations within Finland. The interviewee is responsible for the marketing of all hotels within the collection. In this thesis this person will be referred to as interviewee 4 or participant 3.

During the interviews eight questions were asked relating to the benefits of video marketing, the design and content of the videos, the challenges perceived in video marketing and the measurement of the videos. The most important results are described in the next few paragraphs.

5.2 The benefits of video marketing

All participants mention multiple benefits of video marketing that are important to the company. All participants belief that their videos bring an increase in awareness and that they

help to build the image for the company. This because, videos that are showed are able to show the brand in a visual way to the customer, making it easy to understand and relate. It also creates the image of the company, since videos allow to tell a story. The increase in awareness was one of the benefits that Nielson-Field (2013, 2-3) also identified in her book. She even stated that it was one of the main benefits of videos. Giliam and Flaherty (2015, 133) explained in their research that storytelling creates a framework about the past, present and future that help customers remember what is said. Besides this, stories are more compelling to the customers, because they stimulate different parts of the brain. (Giliam & Flaherty 2015, 133.)

Furthermore, participants belief that videos are a good way to communicate with the guest. All participants use their videos to show the customers where the brand stands for, usually by telling the values or mission of the company. All of them belief that people rather watch a video than they read a written text. Interviewee three described videos as more attractive, interesting and entertaining then written text. Furthermore, videos are better in grabbing the attention of customers because the visuals move. Besides this, all interviewees mentioned that the videos help customers in their decision making process. Interviewee four beliefs that videos are one of the only things people still can concentrate on, therefore videos become an important tool for reaching the customers now and in the future. Interviewee four: "I just read an article were was explained that people nowadays have a lack of concentration. However, people are still able to concentrate on videos, more easily than they do on written text. Of course this is also an important reason for us to do video marketing." These statements are also described in the already existing literature. Lieb (2012, 20), for example, argues that all visuals are better in grabbing attention than a written text, but videos even more due to the amount of brain stimulation it evokes. Videos that are successful in engaging people will stimulate the buying behaviour of the customer (Teixeira, Wendel & Pieters 2012, 144).

All participants also agreed that videos bring interaction with the customer, because customers view, like, share and comment on the videos. Participants especially hope that their videos get shared, since this could lead to more awareness among (potential) customers. Both Ferguson (2008, 182) and Cruz & Fill (2008, 744) belief that sharing brings the benefit of more awareness. However, they also mention that sharing demonstrates a deep form of engagement (Cruz & Fill 2008, 744; Ferguson 2008, 181). Even though this can be seen as a big benefit, none of the participants mentioned it.

Three of the four participants also think that there is a correlation between their sales and the videos already. This is also believed by many researchers, such as Nielson-Field

(2013, 2-3) Gilfoil & Jobs (2012, 639) and various others. Yet, both participants and researchers are not able to give prove of the full effect. In all cases, videos did support other strategies, which is usually the standard according to Nielson-Field (2013, 2-3).

5.3 The design and content of the videos

All the benefits are reached in a different way, because the companies make use of different content, design and video types to express their values. Yet, most of the videos are not trying to sell the product directly. These type of videos often have a story around the product, this demonstrates the benefits of the products, giving the customers more information. Customers prefer this way of receiving advertisement, since they do not want to be influenced in their decision making in a direct way. (Gilliam & Flaherty 2015, 133-134; Jefferson & Tanton 2012, 40.) Besides this, the companies use or will use videos to introduce the company or the employees to the customers. Mentioned was that these are seen as the fun videos that are made with the goal to make the (potential) customers relate to the company or make them curious about the company. Both interviewee two, three and four called these videos the “behind the scenes” videos. Furthermore, the use of personal stories, explanatory videos and videos of events were identified. All participants mentioned that viewers of the videos find it easier to relate to videos where other people are involved. Interviewee three: “Well, if you think about, this book with its pages being black and white and you compare it to a visual, a life human being talking to you with a nice background, which one is more interesting, attractive and easier to relate too.” Therefore, all companies use people in their videos. That people easily relate to other people was also found in a study done by Botha & Reyneke (2013, 162). They state that different parts of the brain are activated when seeing a person. This helps to relate to that person and even feel the same way as the person, due to a mirroring effect in the brain. (Botha & Reyneke 2013, 162) Besides this, all interviewees mentioned that videos should be interesting and entertaining in some way. Participant four called this “educating”, meaning that videos should be educating and entertaining at the same time. Multiple researchers state that videos indeed should be interesting and engaging for the customers. However, Nielson-Field’s (2013, 29) research on high- and low-arousal emotions, has a different view on entertainment in videos. The study found that entertaining does not lead to strong emotions and therefore is a low-arousal trigger. According to her, producers of videos could better choose for other triggers, such as happiness, since high-arousal triggers often lead to more shares. (Nielson-Field 2013, 29.) None of the participants mentioned to use high-arousal triggers in their videos, which could have many reasons. Nielson-Field (2013, 29) found that most companies do not use the high-arousal triggers because they are harder to capture.

All participants have different ways of making sure that the videos they create give the right outcome. The company of interviewee one is the only company that makes use of a long-term strategy, planning and script for their videos. All other participants make use of their main marketing strategy and plan their videos shortly in advance or they start filming at the moment. Multiple researchers state that having a strategy is important before video marketing is done (Costa-Sánchez 2016, 21; Gilfoil & Jobs 2012, 641-642; Nielson-Field 2013, 2-3; Pulizzi 2014, 4). Gilfoil & Jobs (2012, 641-642) suggested a framework where companies make different objectives, targets and measures per video. A similar framework can be seen in the companies of one of the participants. Gilfoil & Jobs (2012, 641-642) believe that a clear strategy takes away some uncertainties that relate to the evaluation of the marketing efforts. Nielson-Field (2013, 2-3) warns companies that starting without a clear strategy could lead to over-investment.

Three of the four participants choose to place their videos on only certain distribution channels. Often a division between professional and non-professional videos is made. One of the participants argued that this helps to get the right message to the right people. Interviewee two: "We have to make it clear to the right customers and potential customers what we are offering that benefits them." In all cases, the choice of channels is based on the target groups of the company. The company of interviewee three makes use of all the social media platforms that are used by their employees. According to the participant, this is done because the company has a young and dynamic team and they are a good representation of the target group. An example on how the employees influence the distribution channels was given by the interviewee. Interviewee three: "one of them (employee) was using Snapchat himself to record during the events. He also happens to be our sort of marketing specialist and then he built the Snapchat account for our company, to make the videos." Choosing the right distribution channels is argued to be important by Nielson-Field (2013, 61) and Rollins, Anitsal & Anitsal (2014, 3). They both claim that using the right distribution channel will lead to more views and shares, because these customers are attracted and looking for this content (Nielson-Field 2013, 61; Rollins, Anitsal & Anitsal 2014, 3).

None of the participants paid much attention to branding and seeding their videos. Some argued that this did not give an added value to their videos, while others did not really think about it in the first place. However, they mentioned that it might get important in a later stage. Researchers believe that seeding is important for some companies (van der Lans et al. 2010, 349; Nielson-Field 2013, 61; Sankar & Kumar 2016, 13). Van der Lans et al. (2010, 349) found that companies can influence the spread of videos in two ways, by

motivation the customers or by seeding the video in the right way. Motivating the customers can be very hard, therefore seeding can be a solution to still reach many people. (Nielson-Field 2013, 61.) The companies seem to have a subtle approach to branding, this is in line with the average (Nielson-Field 2013, 45).

5.4 The challenges of video marketing

The creation of videos comes with its challenges. Three out of four participants stated that they had problems regarding the actual creation of the videos. Yet, the problems mentioned were all different in nature. Participant one mentioned that due to the planning and scripting of the videos, it takes very long before the videos are actually produced. Their videos use a lot of resources in order to be created. According to the interviewee, this makes it very costly and therefore not done enough. Interviewees two and three identified problems that had to do with the fast demand of the videos. Since both do not plan the videos, they perceived problems in taping them right. Participant two believes that some of their videos are not made with a specific target group and goal in mind. This makes it difficult for the company to place them into the right distribution channel. The company of participant three has troubles in organizing the resources to tape the videos in time. Most of their videos capture events that happen in real time. The problems in organizing the resources, sometimes leads to missing the moment. All problems mentioned seem to be related to the strategy of video marketing. However, no literature has described these specific problems so far.

Participant four was the only one who did not identified problems related to the actual capturing of the videos. It was mentioned that the company does have the tendency to keep the videos to themselves. It was stated that this could lead to a problem in the future, because it has a big influence on the visibility of the company. This is a good example why choosing the right distribution channels is crucial for the awareness of the company, as explained by Nielson-Field (2013, 61) and Rollins, Anitsal & Anitsal (2014, 3). Interviewee four argues that the company should do more to let everyone know that they are there. An example was given to demonstrate the visibility problem and how this should change.

“I would like us to put more input into our YouTube channel. So it will be more accessible by our customers, reached more easily. I think at this moment it is hard to find us through our videos. Not yet, but that is something we are working on. After filming all our room types and general areas we will improve this channel automatically.” (Interviewee 4)

Participant two also identified a problem related to the distribution and visibility of videos. The company seems to reach mostly already existing customers unless they are being shared.

“If we put something out, it kind of stays in the first circle of people, who already liked our page and know us or use our services. But of course we try to reach the second and third layer of people in that use mass of people and contacts. So, that is definitely why we would like to have people share our videos.” (Interviewee two)

This problem is also identified by van der Lans et al. (2010, 349) and Nielson-Field (2013, 61) who suggest seeding the video as a solution.

All participants are working on ways to solve and prevent the problems in the future. The company of participant one has started to experiment with taping videos themselves, while participants two and three are thinking about their strategies for the future. The company of participant four is working on new videos, who will be placed on both their own website and their YouTube channel to increase the visibility. The company of participant three hopes to solve their visibility problems by being shared by more people.

5.5 The measurement of the videos

Three out of four respondents measured their videos by tracking the views, likes and shares. These results give the companies information about the reach and engagement that their videos bring. Participants one and two also try to track their customers behaviour in other ways, such as click through rates. These measurements can be identified as cognitive and behavioural measurements. Tracking the behaviour of customers can also lead to measurements for financial benefits. Having a combination of all three types of measurements is in line with the suggestions of researchers, who claim that this gives a clear view of all the effects of the effort. (Cruz & Fill 2008, 754; Ferguson 2008, 182.) One of the companies has recently implemented a system to track the used channels by asking qualitative questions during incoming calls. In the evaluation of their videos they also look at the personal feedback of customers when this is given to them.

Two of the four participants do not look at the measurements of the videos on a weekly bases and one does not measure the videos at all. They all state that this is not necessary at this moment, since they are in the starting phase of using video marketing or there are no big investments involved yet. However, some believe that this will change in the future when videos become a more important tool.

“(Measuring videos is) not (important) at the moment. For the informal videos not much money is spend, but maybe when we put the videos on the booking engine website it will become more important. Of course when there is more money involved, it becomes more important to show the results” (Interviewee four)

Not measuring videos is contradicting to what the researchers claim (Cruz & Fill 2008, 751; Gilfoil & Jobs 2012, 639; van der Lans et al. 2010, 348). They state that measurements justify why decisions and expenses are made (Cruz & Fill 2008, 751; Gilfoil & Jobs 2012, 639; van der Lans et al. 2010, 348). Some even argue that a lack of measurements lead to less investments in video marketing, since these investments cannot be justified (Gilfoil & Jobs 2012, 639).

All participants belief that the benefits of videos are greater than the costs. All state that this is due to the low cost of producing most of their videos. Small differences in awareness, image or opportunity to differentiate can outweighed the cost. Interviewee two also notes that videos are sometimes faster made then a blog is written. All interviewees belief that videos will become more important in the future. Both Luke (2013, 19) and Pulizzi (2012, 122) belief that videos have great benefits for companies, due to the fact that in the recent years the cost for making a video have lowered. They both belief that videos will become more important for the decision making process of customers in the future and videos might even become the standard in marketing practices (Luke 2013, 19; Pulizzi 2012, 122).

6 Conclusion

In the previous chapter the main results of the interviews were mentioned. In this chapter, the main outcomes of the interviews will be compared and discussed with the literature gained in the theoretical part of this paper. Furthermore, this chapter will give some managerial implications. Besides this, the limitations, reliability and validity of this paper will be discussed. At last, some suggestions for further research will be given.

From the research multiple conclusions can be drawn. Overall, marketing experts believe that video marketing is important for the marketing strategy of hospitality companies in Finland. During the study, multiple financial and non-financial benefits were identified. Besides this, video marketing supported other marketing strategies of the companies. It was identified that videos are seen as an important tool in reaching existing and potential customers in an appealing, interesting and interactive way. All these findings have also been identified in already existing literature. However, even though the study suggests that videos are important for the overall marketing strategy of companies, it was also found that most companies do not have a video marketing strategy or planning. This is in contradiction with the recommendations of multiple researchers.

The benefits of video marketing are evoked in various ways in all companies. Almost all companies have different designs and content for their videos, since these often show the company image, which differs in every business. Yet, there are many similarities in most companies. Nearly all videos have an indirect selling message and usually the videos include the value proposition of the company, an introduction to the premises and the employees or an explanation of practical issues. Nearly all videos include humans. This is because the experts believe that the presence of humans helps customers to relate to the company. This is also identified in previous research. Besides this, the study found that companies distribute the videos on different channels. In most cases the videos are placed according to the chosen customer groups targeted. Therefore, not all videos are placed on all distribution channels. This is in line with researchers who state that this helps to reach the right customers. The experts usually make a division between professional and non-professional videos. Surprisingly, the study found no evidence that branding and seeding techniques are done in hospitality companies in Finland. This is in contradiction to research who state that strategies on these topics are needed.

There are many challenges that can occur when video marketing is done. Most challenges that Finnish hospitality companies perceive are not described in the literature

found. The problems are operational in nature and are related to practical issues regarding the actual creation of the videos. These challenges led to difficulties in producing videos of the right quality with the right content or difficulties in producing enough videos. Even though the problems described are practical, most problems seem to start with the strategy of the video marketing efforts or, in most cases, not having a strategy for the videos. Already existing literature suggest that marketers should have a strategy before starting with video marketing, which could help in solving most of the problems. Yet, one case claimed that their well-defined strategy and planning was the cause of their practical problems. No literature was found that described this phenomena. Besides this, problems were identified regarding the distribution and reach of videos. These challenges are also described in the literature. According to research these problems can be solved by using seeding strategies. At last, the study found that at this moment it is impossible to measure the financial benefits of videos. This was expected since researchers in multiple industries also have difficulties in finding methods for these measurements. According to researchers, this uncertainty could lead to over- or underinvestment. However, the study found that marketing experts are not worried about this challenge. They state that at this moment they do not need this information. Yet, some mention that it might get important in the future.

In most cases the video marketing efforts are measured by cognitive and behavioural measurements to gain information about the reach and engagement that videos bring. Surprisingly, it is often not done on a weekly bases and sometimes not at all. This is usually because of two reasons. Companies are either in the starting phase of using video marketing and can therefore not measure accurately or the investment in video marketing is not high enough to spend the resources on. This however is in contradiction to what researchers claim.

Even though video marketing efforts are not always measured precisely, experts do consider videos to be worth more than they cost. The benefits, who are usually non-financial out weight the investments easily, due to the ease of production and the relatively low cost. This perception on video marketing is in line with the findings of previous studies. Besides this, the study found that marketing experts belief that video marketing will become very important in the future, this belief is also shared by multiple researchers.

In conclusion, marketing experts belief that video marketing brings important benefits for companies. These benefits are both financial and non-financial. This is in line with previous studies. The videos evoke these benefits in multiple ways who differ per company. This because videos are often created to show the company image, which differs in every

business. Video marketing does come with its challenges. However, these are usually practical and do not have major effects on the video marketing strategies of companies. Researchers suggest that most issues can be solved by implementing video marketing and seeding strategies. One challenge that is not only identified in the hospitality industry, but in almost all industries, is the difficulty of measuring financial benefits of video marketing. This study found that hospitality companies in Finland are also not able to measure these. However, most companies do not need this information at this moment. Yet, this might change in the future. Overall, companies usually do not measure their videos precisely, however they do believe they receive more benefits from videos they cost, due to the small amount of resources needed. Therefore, they are perceived as important. Furthermore, Finnish marketing experts believe that videos will become more important in the future. This is also believed by multiple researchers.

6.1 Criticism and limitations

The researcher aimed to produce a paper which was as complete as possible. However, some limitations should be taken into account while reading this research.

First of all, the interviews were only conducted in the city of Helsinki. Despite the fact that most hotels and hotels' headquarters are located in Helsinki, it does create a geographical bias for this research paper. Besides this, all participants are marketing experts. No other stakeholders that are involved in the marketing decision process were asked to participate. Even though it is most likely that marketing experts have the most knowledge and interest in this topic, it could give the paper a bias regarding the opinions of the participants.

The extensiveness of the topic can also be seen as a limitation for this paper. Video marketing is very complex and has many relations to other topics within marketing. The researcher had to decide what to include in the paper and the interviews. Though the researcher tried her best to include all important data, critics might have a different opinion on what should have been included in the paper.

Another limitation of the paper is its amount of respondents. Only four interviews were conducted in this research, due to the small response rate of the sample. This phenomenon is called participation bias by some researchers (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill 2016, 397). The sample span of the research were all marketing experts of independent hotels and hotel chains of Helsinki. However, multiple independent hotels and hotel chains indicated that they did not want to participate in the research. Although conducting hundreds of interviews with marketing experts would have been un-feasible, it would have

been beneficial for the research if more participants were interviewed. Nevertheless, at the end sufficient and reliable information for the research was collected.

6.2 Reliability and validity

Validity can be seen as the accuracy of the measurements in a research (Saldaña, Leavy & Beretvas 2011, 134). Some even say that it states how true the findings of the research are (Silverman). However, it is hard to tell the validity of a qualitative research, yet some information about validity can be found in the way the data for the results are collected (Taylor, Bogdan & DeVault 2016, 180). The way the data is collected for this research is explained in the methodology chapter of this paper. One of the important decision the researcher made, was to do real life interviews, since this gives the researcher the opportunity to ask for more information when needed and it provides the opportunity to explain and clarify questions when these are misunderstood or interpreted wrong. This way of gathering data can be considered valid, because there are as little uncertainties as possible (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill 2016, 394). Besides this the sample of the research was chosen. Due to a lack of resources it was not possible to include everyone involved in the topic of the research. Therefore, the author chose to only interview marketing experts who are working in the Helsinki region.

Reliability of the research depends on the replicability of the results (Saldaña, Leavy & Beretvas 2011, 134). The higher the degree of consistency in the results the higher the reliability of the study (Silverman 2005, 210-223). Yet, the measurement of reliability in qualitative research can be hard (Saldaña, Leavy & Beretvas 2011, 134). When looking at the current research, it can be said that it is not fully reliable. This because the amount of participants did not lead to a complete saturation of the results. This means that if the research would be repeated with other participants within the sample, the results may differ, because of different opinions. Due to a lack of resources it was not possible to include every marketing expert of Finland. Research suggest that in this case it is important to select the participants whose perspectives will best represent the situation, which was done by the author (Saldaña, Leavy & Beretvas 2011, 33). However, the paper could have been more reliable if more participants would have been interviewed.

In qualitative research, credibility and trustworthiness are also important factors. Credibility relies on the believability of the author. It can be seen in the time spend in the field, the amount of participants in the research, the analytic methods used and the conclusions that are drawn from all that. (Saldaña, Leavy & Beretvas 2011, 134-136.) This research can be seen as credible, since the author has spent a reasonable time in the field to do

the research and the methods used during the study were academic. The amount of participants, however, were not sufficient to generalize the thesis for the whole industry. More interviews with a variety of experts is needed for that. Yet, some conclusions could be drawn. The conclusions drawn from the research were written with care. However, there is always some bias, since only the author has written these conclusions. This bias is minimized by sending the last version of this thesis to the participants of the research. They were able to comment on the thesis if something had to be changed. The trustworthiness of the research can be seen in the credibility of the writing. Researchers can enlarge their trustworthiness by mentioning the amount of time spend on the research, informing the reader about the exact amount of participants in the study and tell about the dilemmas that were faced during the research. (Saldaña, Leavy & Beretvas 2011, 134-136.) In the thesis there has been complete transparency about these topics and therefore the thesis can be seen as trustworthy. Overall, credibility and trustworthiness are based on the researchers honesty and integrity (Saldaña, Leavy & Beretvas 2011, 134-136). The author beliefs that she has written the paper honestly and integrity.

Before the interviews were done, some ethical considerations were made. Thoughts were given about what information was needed to fully inform the participants and protect their confidentiality in the research without giving a bias to the study, by giving too much information (Silverman 2005, 257). This was all written in an interview guide that was given to the participants on forehand. In this guide, information was given about the goal of the research, the amount of questions asked during the interview and the expected duration of the interview. Furthermore, information about the participants rights to withdraw from the research at any moment was given and the confidentiality of the interviews was explained. The interview guide can be found in appendix 1.

In the paper, all interviews are made anonymous to avoid recognition of the interviewee, which could lead to negative consequences for the participant. All other contact information is also kept confidential.

Before the paper was published, it was send to all the participants. This gave them the opportunity to ask questions and request changes that they felt were necessary.

6.3 Further research

The aim of the research was to capture the perceived importance of videos in the hotel industry of Finland. The research found some evidence that marketing experts perceive videos as an important tool for their marketing strategy. However, further research could be

done on this topic. The study found that marketing experts perceive most challenges related to video marketing during the actual creation of the videos. Little to no literature was found on these specific problems. Therefore future research on these practical challenges can be done. Besides this, all participants of this research revealed that measuring financial benefits of video marketing is not possible at this moment. This, however, has a significant influence on the perceived importance of video marketing. Therefore, more research should be done on finding frameworks to measure the financial benefits of videos. For these researches more time should be taken to find participants and do interviews, since this could lead to a bigger sample size than the current research. Furthermore, a variety of experts could be asked to participate in the study. This could lead to less biased research results, since multiple viewpoints are taken into account.

Moreover, additional studies can be done on the perception of customers. The current research found some evidence that customers create a certain image of the company based on the videos they provide. The assumptions the customers make do not necessarily be mentioned by the company. This can be seen in a quote of interviewee 1.

“We get more and more contacts actually from people who found us through social media, and that is how we build our brand. So I suppose it all comes together. And they often have some kind of thought in their heads that they think, well your company is like this. And usually its, 90% now-a-days, they instantly they say you are really are environmental friendly and that is something they assume. Even though we have never post anything that we says are very green. But they see that we have a lot of responsible subjects in social media.” (Interviewee 1, 2017)

The way videos can change the image that people have is already researched by Shani, Chen, Wang and Hua (2009). However, little to no research could be found on the phenomena that people may create a different or broader image about a company than the company is actually telling, like interviewee 1 told in the interview. This phenomena could be a risk when people have a different image than the company would like to have. However it could also be a benefit when the customers have a better picture of the company that is in line with the image the company would like to have. Therefore, more research could be done on the way people create an image of the company due to watching videos.

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Appendices

Appendix 1. Interview guide

I am Bianca Hofstede and 21 years old. I study at Haaga-Helia University of Applied Sciences and I am currently in my graduation phase, writing my bachelor thesis about video marketing. Video marketing has become an increasingly popular subject within marketing and therefore researched a lot. However, video marketing brings many challenges that researchers have failed to reach consensus about. Some studies show that these challenges and uncertainties about video marketing can also be seen within companies, but most are only based on the view of researchers. This research will focus on the perceived importance and challenges of video marketing in the hotel industry of Helsinki, by capturing the opinions and viewpoints of marketing managers.

In order to answer the main research question, I would like to ask some questions regarding the use of videos in the hotel industry. The research will involve an interview of 8 questions that will take approximately 30 to 45 minutes of your time. The interview will only ask for personal opinions, therefore no in-depth company information is needed. The participation of this research is completely voluntary and participants have the right to refuse answering any questions or withdraw from the research at any stage without having to give any reason. All contact information and identification data will be strictly confidential. This means that, this information will not be used in the paper. However, the interviews will be recorded. The data that will derive from the interview will be used in the empirical part of the study. The information will be compared with already existing literature that the author has gathered. If you have any questions regarding the interview or research you can contact me.

Contact details:

Bianca Hofstede

+358 417538400

Bianca.hofstede@live.nl

Interview questions

1. What benefits do you think that videos create for your company?
2. Why are these benefits important to the company?
3. How does the content of videos evoke these benefits?
4. How can you make sure that videos create the desired benefits?
5. Are there any challenges in video marketing that can stop the benefits from appearing?
6. How would you prevent this from happening?
7. How would you evaluate the benefits of videos?
8. Do you personally think that the videos bring more value than they cost?